

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Amended) A loading device for loading a web forming wire, said loading device comprising:

a fixed base member;

a movable loading member coupled to said base member, said loading member structured and arranged to move in a vertical fashion relative to said base member to thereby apply a loading force to said wire;

at least one flexible belt joined to the loading member and to the base member,

means for introducing a pressure medium into a space defined by said at least one flexible belt, said loading member and said base member below said movable loading member to generate said vertical movement of said loading member;

roller means including at least one roller structured and arranged to support said loading member such that the force generated against said loading member by said wire is directed against a side of said roller whereby jamming of said loading member is prevented; and

wherein said at least one roller is coupled to said base member by a rotating shaft to enable the rotation of said roller.

2. (Original) The loading device according to claim 1, wherein said base member comprises a slide rail which extends from an upper surface of said base member and wherein said loading member is structured and arranged to receive said slide rail.

3. (Previously amended) The loading device according to claim 2, wherein said roller means comprises a single roller which extends substantially across the entire width of the loading device.

4. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 3, further comprising supporting bearings arranged between said single roller and an upper surface of said slide rail for supporting said single roller and wherein said supporting bearings are arranged at selected intervals along a length of said single roller.

5. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 2, wherein in said roller means comprises a plurality of rollers arranged at selected intervals in the cross-machine direction and wherein said slide rail has a plurality of indentations, each one of said indentations being structured and arranged for receiving one of said plurality of rollers.

6. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 2, wherein said roller means comprises at least one roller arranged on each side of said slide rail.

7. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 1, wherein said roller means comprises a plurality of vertically arranged ball stacks, each one of said balls stacks being arranged at selected locations in a cross-machine direction of said loading device and each one of said plurality of ball stacks being housed in a corresponding bushing attached to said loading member.

8. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 7, wherein each one of said ball stacks are arranged at intervals of 200 to 280 mm from one another in said cross machine direction.

9. (Previously cancelled)

10. (Previously presented) The loading device according to claim 1, further comprising a friction reducing means arranged between the base member and said loading member and wherein said friction reducing means comprises one of a friction reducing slide piece and balls/round bars arranged between said base member and said loading member.

11. (Previously cancelled)

12. (Previously cancelled)